

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A mounting system for mounting an object to the railing of a deck, said mounting system comprising:

5           a base structure having a top side and a bottom side;

          two opposing elements extending from said bottom side of said base structure, wherein each of said opposing elements define a plurality of stepped  
10           surfaces that are generally parallel to said bottom side of said base structure at different distances from said base structure; and

          an adjustment mechanism for selectively adjusting a distance between said opposing elements.

15

2. The system according to Claim 1, further including a support pole that extends from said top surface of said base structure.

20

3. The system according to Claim 1, wherein said base structure defines a track.

4. The system according to Claim 3, wherein at least one of said opposing elements engages said track and is slidably adjustable within said track.

5 5. The system according to Claim 3, wherein both of said opposing elements engage said track and are slidably adjustable in position within said track.

6. The system according to Claim 4, further  
10 including bolts for selectively locking said at least one of said opposing elements into said track at a fixed position.

7. The system according to Claim 1, wherein each of  
15 said opposing elements defines a stepped surface approximately three quarters of an inch below said bottom surface of said base structure.

8. The system according to Claim 7, wherein each of  
20 said opposing elements defines a second stepped surface approximately one inch below said bottom surface of said base structure.

9. The system according to Claim 8, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a third stepped surface approximately one and a half inches below said bottom surface of said base structure.

5

10. A mounting device for a engaging a wooden rail, said device comprising:

a flat structure;

10 two opposing elements that extend from said flat structure, wherein each of said opposing elements define a plurality of stepped surfaces that are generally parallel to said flat structure but are at different distances from said flat structure.

15 11. The device according to Claim 10, wherein said opposing elements are positionally adjustable to create a selected distance between said opposing elements.

20 12. The device according to Claim 10, wherein a track is disposed on said flat structure and at least one of said opposing elements is selectively positionable along said track.

13. The device according to Claim 10, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a stepped surface approximately three quarters of an inch below said flat structure.

5

14. The device according to Claim 10, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a second stepped surface approximately one inch below said flat structure.

10

15. The device according to Claim 10, wherein each of said opposing elements defines a third stepped surface approximately one and a half inches below said flat structure.

15

16. The device according to Claim 10, further including a support pole extending at a perpendicular from said flat structure.

20

17. A universal mounting device for mounting to a  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch plank, a one inch plank or a one and a half inch plank, said device comprising:

a flat structure;

... ,

two opposing elements that extend from said flat structure, each of said opposing elements defining a plurality of stepped surfaces that are generally parallel to said flat structure, wherein a  
5 first stepped surface is approximately three quarters of an inch below said flat structure, a second stepped surface is approximately one inch below said flat surface and a third stepped surface is approximately one and a half inches below said flat surface.

10

18. The device according to Claim 17 wherein said opposing elements are a predetermined distance apart and said predetermined distance is selectively adjustable.

15

19. The device according to Claim 17, further including a pole extending from said flat structure.